

# Program Report July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012





# 2011-2012 BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

Robert M. Damminger Freeholder Director

Giuseppe (Joe) Chila Deputy Freeholder Director

Heather Simmons Freeholder Liaison

Lyman Barnes Freeholder

Vincent H. Nestore Jr. Freeholder

Adam J. Taliaferro Freeholder

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The Workforce Investment Board is committed to active partnerships among business, government, and community-based organizations to promote continuous economic growth.

We provide access to quality education, training, and support services; and we assist businesses to develop more productive employees through programs and services accessible to people of all generations and ability.

### Message from the Freeholder Director



Robert M. Damminger

It takes a county to help boost economic growth and the Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders has taken its role as economic engine driver to new heights in 2011 and 2012.

This Freeholder Board is always working to provide leaner, smarter and smaller government. With our hard work and dedication to our county residents, we have made Gloucester County a go-to location for business, particularly small businesses, which comprise 93 percent of all companies in the county. As a result, new businesses are enticed to Gloucester County, assured by our commitment to help them with site selection and acquisition, the development of financial loans and financing options where available, and technical assistance.

In 2010, 2011, and 2012, Gloucester County government had decreased its spending through shared services, which include a regionalized tax assessment service and a county-wide Emergency Medical Service system. The use of shared services, which have saved millions of dollars in a number of county municipalities, have saved our taxpayers \$24 million per year.

The board also continues to decrease its debt, which has been cut by \$27 million over a three-year period, helping the county maintain its high financial rating, another incentive for the location of new business and the retention of current employers.

In the face of an economy that has stalled plans for programs and projects in other areas, Gloucester County continues to provide support and assistance to the development of Rowan Boulevard in Glassboro and the construction of the Port of Paulsboro, which will spur job growth along the Delaware River. We also heralded the opening of a new county Justice Complex in Woodbury in 2011 and the completion of the Route 322 bypass in Harrison Township in 2012. The operation of the DREAM Park, a state-of-the-art equestrian facility in Logan Township, has boosted the county's tourism industry. The New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism has listed Gloucester County as the highest in the state for tourism growth.

We recognize the importance to area businesses of a solid county infrastructure so we proactively maintain our county roads, ever vigilant for repairs and road enhancements. Gloucester County is the first county in the state to develop a complete inventory of structurally sound bridges and we will continue to make road maintenance a priority.

In partnership with the Gloucester County Workforce Investment Board and our local county businesses, the Freeholder Board will continue to promote a skilled and trained workforce to meet the needs of the county today and into the future. We will nurture and encourage business vitalization because of its contributions to the quality of life in the county.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Damminger
Freeholder Director

# Message from the Freeholder Liaison



**Heather Simmons** 

Throughout 2011 and 2012, the Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Gloucester County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) have continued to focus on bringing employers and job seekers in the county together by hosting two Career Resource Events — one in October 2011 and another in February 2012.

Our Freeholder Board works closely with the WIB to provide resources and opportunities to help those in our community find work or improve their job skills to help them enter or advance further in the workforce. Additionally, during times such as these, it's important to help people strengthen their personal confidence by giving them tools to become more successful.

The Career Resource Events, hosted by the WIB and held onsite at Gloucester County College, are structured in two parts. The first part offers job seekers free career workshops designed to improve their skills to aid in future employment advancement. These career workshops take place about a week before the actual Career Resource Day, where job seekers can talk with regional employers to find out about and discuss job opportunities, learn about social support services and talk with career counselors.

The October 2011 event brought together 50 employers and over 250 job seekers. There were 35 job seekers who were able to secure a position as a result of the October 2011 Career Resource Event. There was one young woman who was hired by Avon right on the spot at the Career Resource Event! It was reported that both employers and job seekers thanked the WIB staff for holding the affair and inquired as to when they will do it again.

The February event again brought over 50 employers with current job openings together with job seekers from throughout the county. At the February 2012 event, there were 27 job seekers who obtained a job because of the event, and feedback from employers continued to be positive about these events which are now regularly scheduled by the WIB.

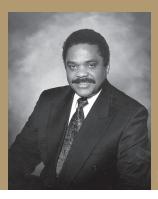
Although unemployment in Gloucester County is reportedly just over 9% we believe that the real number is greater, and events like the Career Resource Event will help employers fill job openings and job seekers return to work. The WIB plays a critical role in connecting employers and job seekers to make employment happen in Gloucester County.

Sincerely,

#### **Heather Simmons**

Freeholder Liaison

# MESSAGE FROM THE WIB CHAIRMAN



Hosea Johnson

A central mission of the Gloucester County Workforce Investment Board is to prepare the current and future labor force for occupations likely to grow and connect job seekers with existing jobs. Workforce development refers to activities that increase the skills, work competency, employment, job retention, and earnings of the employed and unemployed workers.

The Gloucester County workforce development system is focused on both the worker and the employer. The One Stop system performs economic-development, educational and social-service functions. The workforce training provides the best, most up-to-date training to employees, making them more competitive in the workforce and more valuable to the employer.

The Gloucester County workforce development system is a unique strategic alliance of business, government and education. The success of any business or organization lies in its human capital. Finding and developing our human capital is especially critical in today's global economy. Having the right labor force at the right price can mean the difference between growth and contraction for the business and for Gloucester County's economy.

The Gloucester County Workforce Investment Board brings together these partners of business, government and education to leverage the resources of the partnership to help address common challenges such as job creation, accessing business financing and resources, and developing innovative responses to emerging business trends and opportunities.

The One Stop Career Center at 215 Crown Point Road in Thorofare, New Jersey provides a single location where workers and job seekers can find whatever job market assistance they may need. The One Stop Career Center provides a single point of entry for support and service.

I extend a very sincere "Thank You" to the Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders, members of the Workforce Investment Board Staff and all the partners that support the Workforce Investment Board mission. The work that we do is vitally important and enhances the quality of life for Gloucester County citizens. The success of the year is due to the collective efforts of all.

Sincerely,

Hosea Johnson, Chair Gloucester County Workforce Investment Board

### Message from the Executive Director



Thomas Bianco

The Workforce Investment Board is an active board comprised of volunteers from the public and private sector. Together we are improving the employability of our residents and providing employers with a trained workforce thus strengthening the economy.

Through a collaborative effort the Workforce Investment Board and the Gloucester County One-Stop Career Center served 27,779 individuals during Program Year 2011. This was an increase of approximately 9% from 2010 (July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011) Services provided through this effort included but were not limited to training and education, assistance with unemployment benefits, job referrals, career guidance, and assistance with resume writing and interviewing skills.

During Program Year 2011, the WIB staff successfully organized and implemented, two Career Resource Events, one on October 14, 2011 and one on February 10, 2012. They were both held at Gloucester County College. Each event had over 60 employers and approximately 400 attendees. The week prior to our February 2012 event, workshops were conducted at GCC to assist job seekers with resume writing, interviewing skills and other issues associated with being suddenly unemployed. They were well attended and the results of this effort were noted by employers in attendance. Our job seekers were prepared with updated resumes, well organized and dressed for success.

In May 2012, NJLWD sponsored a Career Fair for Veterans. The event was held on the Battleship New Jersey. WIB Staff was instrumental in recruiting employers to participate in this event.

All of the federally mandated WIA performance measurements were exceeded for Program Year 2011. This is a significant accomplishment during these economic times. The One Stop Career Center staff are responsible for executing training and educational programs effectively and efficiently.

The Business Development Initiative, funded with New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development Interdepartmental Funds, was continued during PY 2011. We were able to use these dollars to enhance our Career Fairs, Business Tool Kits and WIB website. Gloucester County's Business Attraction and Retention team was busy this past year. Business Retention is a top departmental priority. The "Team" visited area employers to assess their needs and provide referrals and assistance. In 2011, over 75 companies were visited. In 2012/2013, we have set a goal of 96 business retention visits. The outreach generated an interest in the WIB among employers and some companies participated in our Career Resource Events.

Our seven (7) committees, each with their own mission, continue to have an active role in the provision of services delivered to our county residents thus increasing their employability. All Committees will be involved with the Federal and State Certification Process of the WIB which must be completed by January 2014.

The Gloucester County Workforce Investment Board, along with its partners will continue to make every effort to ensure that county residents and businesses are successful.

Sincerely,

Thomas Bianco
Executive Director

# THE SHARON DUTRA MEMORIAL STUDENT TRAINING ACHIEVEMENT RECOGNITION

When WIA employment specialist Terri Levins was asked to nominate a candidate for this year's STAR awards, she didn't have to think twice.

"I can honestly say Thakir is the most deserving individual I have met in the last 15 years," Levins says.

Levins was speaking of Thakir Ismael, the county's most recent recipient of the Sharon Dutra Memorial Student Training Achievement Recognition (STAR) award. The award, which is given annually to one deserving client in each county, recognizes students who succeeded despite overwhelming obstacles.

Of course, most job seekers today know finding a job is a real battle. But not many face the fight Ismael did — the war in Iraq, which threatened not only his livelihood, but also his life and the lives of his family.

"(Ismael) was a doctor in Iraq at the height of the war," Levins says. Due to danger present for physicians living in his homeland, Ismael and his wife, along with two young children, were relocated to the United States by Catholic Social Services.



He left behind his home, his profession, his friends and family in order to establish a better life in our country. The Ismael family was originally placed in Audubon.

Unfortunately, Ismael's credentials are not easily transferrable to this country, so he found himself without a job and without any network to look for employment. The language barrier proved to be another obstacle, as many employers thought he

may not be a good fit to work with their clientele because he wouldn't be able to communicate easily with them.

Ismael met Levins in April 2011, at the Gloucester County One-Stop Career Center. "He came looking for medical training. Even though he could not be a doctor, he wanted to stay in the field he loved," Levins says. "From the minute I met him, I could tell he'd be a very deserving candidate for training."

After spending the afternoon discussing careers and researching the best way Ismael could reenter the medical workforce, Levins referred him to the medical assistant program at ASI Career Institute. The eight week training program was funded under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Following graduation, Ismael started looking for work in the medical field. He eventually accepted a position as a medical assistant at Turnersville Internal Medicine and Geriatrics. He also learned that there was a large Iraqi population in Washington Township, and relocated his family there.

Ismael would like to one day be a practicing physician in his new country, but he realizes that will take considerable time and money. While he's working toward that goal, he's happy to be gainfully employed in a field he loves, and is grateful to Levins and the WIA programs that helped him achieve this.

"The GSETA Association always looks for individuals who have overcome significant barriers," says Daniel Angelucci, Division Head-DWD and Levins' supervisor. "This is a case where tremendous barriers were faced — fleeing one's homeland, leaving behind his roots and his profession, and settling into a new country where he did not speak the language. Ismael faced multiple barriers, but his strong drive to overcome all the obstacles he faced allowed him to achieve all that he has today."

"He is a perfect example of someone who doesn't allow barriers to deter him, whose strong will, determination and hard work led him to reach his present goals and strive for those in the future," he adds.

#### PERFORMANCE REPORT

During the Program Year of 2011-2012, the Gloucester County Workforce Investment Board has met or exceeded its performance measures as set by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The following statistics reflect services rendered to the residents of Gloucester County through the Gloucester County One-Stop Career Center during Program Year 2011 (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012).

The Gloucester County WIB used criteria established by the State Employment and Training Commission regarding skill level and competency guidelines to be used as a basis for the selection of skill training programs and competency curriculum in the local areas.

Participants Served	27,779
*One-Stop Orientation	3,896
Job Search Assistance Workshops	5,027
GA Job Search Workshop	1,083
Assessments	3,892
** Job Openings Received	958
Staff Assisted Services	7,585
Job Placements	478
DVR Rehab	105
Job Orders	240
**Tuition Waivers	298
***Learning Link Participants	221
***WIA / WDP— ITA Grants	243

<sup>\*</sup> This number decreased as a result of the State initiating a new method of orientating customers to the system.

<sup>\*\*</sup> The implementation of On Ramp impacted this number, since employers can now register job vacancies online.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> One-Stop counselors placed approximately 464 people collectively into WIA, WDP and GED/ABE sponsored training. An additional 298 people attended local community colleges through the tuition waiver program. Eligibility for this program has become more restrictive, therefore reducing the amount of waivers issued.

### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The table below indicates the Performance Measures of Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth. These measures are based on the Program Year July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 and are taken directly from the FutureWorks Performance Matters database, which is used by the State of New Jersey Department of Labor to measure performance. In order to pass a performance measure, the % achieved must be above 80%. As the table indicates, the Gloucester County One-Stop has passed and exceeded all of its measures.

	Local	Actual	% Achieved	Performance
	Workforce			Measure
	Investment			
	Act Plan			
Adult Entered Employment	77.1%	90.4%	117.3%	Exceeds
Adult retention	78.4%	92.9%	118.4%	Exceeds
Adult Avg. Earnings	\$10,314	\$13,320	129.1%	Exceeds
DW Entered Employment	82.2%	82.9%	131.5%	Exceeds
DW Retention	85.4%	89.9%	113.3%	Exceeds
DW Avg. Earnings	\$12,840	\$15,847	112.5%	Exceeds
Youth Placement	59%	73.6%	135.6%	Exceeds
Youth Attain Degree	59%	62.%	127.1%	Exceeds
Literacy/Numeracy	45%	61.5%	166.7%	Exceeds

#### STANDING COMMITTEES AND STAFF

The members of the seven standing committees are entrusted with the responsibility of promoting the values and benefits of the Workforce Investment Board. It is their mission to build an educated and productive workforce in order to meet the workforce needs of Gloucester County. Actions of the individual committees are overseen by an Executive Committee which provides leadership in the development of policy recommendations and the promotion of the overall strategic workforce plan. The County Board of Chosen Freeholders relies heavily on those suggestions. Therefore, all actions taken on committee level must be reported, and if necessary, action taken to allow the recommendations to occur.

Through the volunteer efforts of many individuals and the professionals on staff, the Workforce Investment Board has been able to provide quality education and training consistent with the changing needs of Gloucester County employers. Graduates of Workforce Investment Board programs are being trained in valuable life skills that make them productive members of society and give them a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Bridget DiGiambattista
Support Staff



Karen Dickel
Program Analyst



**Eileen Gallo**Program Development Specialist



#### WIB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee provides leadership in the development of policy recommendations and for the promotion of the overall strategic workforce plan. These suggestions impact decisions made by the Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Therefore, all actions taken on the sub-committee level must be reported, and if necessary, action taken to allow the recommendations to occur. In addition, the Executive Committee ensures the continuity of the committees' missions in workforce areas they develop, and adherence to the general mission of the Workforce Investment Board.



#### APPRENTICESHIP & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Apprenticeship/Workforce Development Committee's mission is to provide employers a skilled and competent workforce and to assure them that we are committed to being a workforce ready community.

A joint project/collaboration with Woodbury High School is still in its infancy stage. The Committee Chair attended the Department of Education's Statewide Career Technical Education Conference. Part of the discussion included the Personalized Education Plan the state will be piloting. This plan coincides with the concept that the committee is trying to initiate with Woodbury High School.

In order to enhance the success of our project with Woodbury High School, we are partnering with the Gloucester County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee to coordinate and promote work readiness initiatives between Education, Government and Business. It is our desire to have Chamber members endorse this effort and allow students to interact with their place of business on a regular basis.

In May 2012, some members of the committee met with area high school counselors to explain the purpose of the Workforce Investment Board. Our goal for the meeting was to introduce ourselves and the employment and educational services available to the youth of the county. Many high school counselors are not aware of services available to their student bodies. We also encouraged them to inform us of training programs they believe would be appropriate for their graduating students. It is our intention to meet with the high school counselors on a periodic basis.

The State is encouraging other WIBs to form an Apprenticeship Committee similar to ours. James Manning, NJLWD State Apprenticeship Coordinator contacted our Co-chair asking

Ken Biddick
Co-Chairman



Randee Davidson

for information and highlights about our committee. The Committee members received this as positive recognition for their efforts

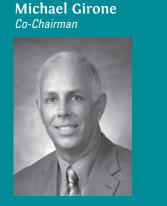
The Committee looks forward to another year of working together and collaborating with education and business, with the end result being a healthier economy.

#### COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING COMMITTEE

The mission of the Communications/Marketing Committee is to develop and implement a strategy that effectively communicates the Workforce Investment Board's goals and objectives to the community at-large. Within this mission, the committee prioritizes informational techniques that maximize the use of community resources to publicize and market the services that the WIB provides to the residents, business community, institutions and agencies of Gloucester County. The committee works to achieve this mission in a manner that is cost-effective and within the budget established by the WIB.

During Program Year 2011-2012 the Communications/Marketing Committee continued to distribute electronic newsletters that communicate the best practices and services that the WIB has to offer. It was also during this program year that "WIB—in-a-flash" was developed. "WIB-in-a-flash" is a flash drive containing easy-to-access WIB information and other Economic Development Services that can be used by the WIB staff and Executive Committee members in order to communicate effectively in a public forum. The committee also publicizes the Career Resource Events, including the Career Workshop sessions, that aid in bringing together employers with current job openings and job seekers throughout Gloucester County.

Kathy Farinaccio
Co-Chairwoman



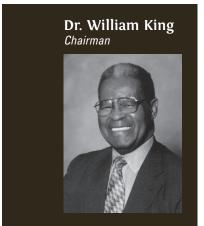
#### COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Community Needs Assessment Committee strives to ensure that the needs of the workforce are being met in a timely and efficient manner. The Committee is responsible to investigate and recommend to other boards and governing bodies those areas it finds in need or want of assistance and/or improvement. The Committee provides special focus on the issue of Adult Literacy in response to the general population. The Committee sees a need to educate more people, to provide more transportation for the disabled and the economically disadvantaged along with providing timely information and services to those vendors working with or employing those county residents who are either mentally or physically challenged.

To address special issues relevant to the overall population and to some specific populations, subcommittees have been developed. These include Disability Issues, Transportation, and Literacy. These committees meet quarterly and on an as needed basis.

During Program Year 2011 the WIB's literacy funding was reduced. Our excellent partnership with Gloucester County College Continuing Education allowed us to maintain our past level of service.

Inmates at the GC Correctional Facility continue to receive GED prep and job search assistance. These endeavors continue to be coordinated by the Community Needs Assessment Committee. The GED and literacy services are funded by the WIB through a contract with Gloucester County College.

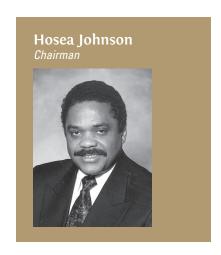


It is through the generosity of Mid-Atlantic Career and Education Center that career assistance and job search classes are being conducted at the facility at no charge. This program, known as WorkPlus, had 80 individuals complete the training; of this population, only two participants are known to have returned to jail.

#### COORDINATION COMMITTEE

The Gloucester County One-Stop Career Center System represents a community based network of support agencies and systems that aid Gloucester County residents with their transition to employment and self-sufficiency. The system strives for flexibility and effectiveness through the creation of a professional, user-friendly atmosphere and application of technology and shared resources.

Throughout the 2011-2012 unemployment crisis, the Coordination Committee worked with the One-Stop Career Center staff to help expand services to the unemployed by conducting Career Resource Events. At the October 2011 and February 2012 events over 50 employers were present and over 400 entered the doors seeking employment opportunities.



# RESOURCE ANALYSIS & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The objective of the Resource Analysis and Performance Management Committee is to analyze customer flow, program outcomes, economic trends and other underlying influences that may affect the final measures on which the local area is measured. These final measurements have a direct impact upon future federal and state funding amounts.

The Committee reviews all publicly funded programs within the One-Stop Career Center. The Committee collects and analyzes sufficient data to ensure that such funding is effectively serving the customers of the workforce readiness system. This Committee identifies successful program management and resource allocation. Coordinating federal, state, and locally funded programs, the Committee can make recommendations for the distribution of these monies.

The Committee also reviews all publicly funded program proposals and budgets outside the One-Stop Career Center to ensure consistency with the Workforce Investment Board Plan. These include but are not limited to Carl Perkins funding requests and special funding requests related to education/vocational training made available through the State of New Jersey or federal government, such as Youth Transition to Work and Construction Trades for Minorities and Women.

During the 2011-12 Program Year, the committee was charged by the WIB Executive Committee to oversee the development of the WIB budget. This budget was ultimately approved by the Executive committee as well as the State Employment Training Commission (SETC). In addition, the committee continued to monitor program funds that went to occupational/skill training vendors who provide skill training to our county residents. It was necessary to determine if the training enabled the individuals to obtain employment. This required the committee to focus on the job placement rate of providers. In order to

Stevan Wolf



Gary Schwarz



be more accurate in tracking the job placement rate and the distribution of funds, the committee developed an updated spreadsheet monitored placement rates on a monthly basis. In addition, the committee established a spread sheet that tracked the "shelf-life" of funds as the WIB has several funding streams with different start and end dates.

#### Youth Council

The mission of the Youth Council Committee is to provide a system that will encourage the youth in Gloucester County to be an integral part of the community through various flexible, educational and career activities. The committee continues to make progress with the task of bringing together youth of various ages and social-economic backgrounds.

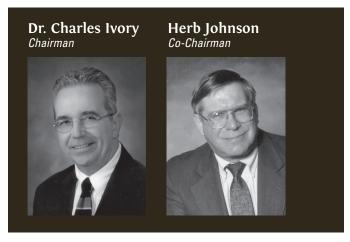
In 2011 the Youth Council made great strides in attaining its priority goals. These goals had been previously identified by the Council, participants and staff of the Youth One Stop. Some of those goals include but are not limited to obtaining additional staff, increasing enrollment, increasing job placement, outreach and marketing, etc.

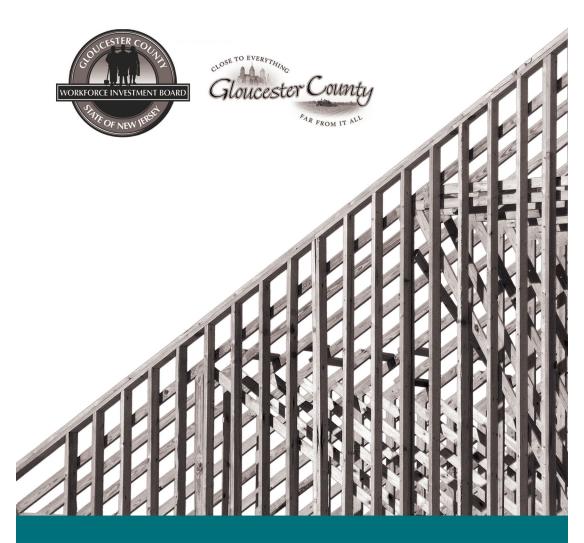
The Administrator and instructors of the program were able to address those identified goals. Additional math instruction was built into the program. New incentives were created to encourage regular and longer daytime attendance; thus allowing participants to take the GED exam earlier. Recruiting efforts were enhanced with the creation of a Facebook page. Posters were professionally created and displayed throughout the County of Gloucester. Incentives were implemented to encourage participants to reach out to their peers and inspire them to attend the Youth One Stop. These new recruiting efforts increased public awareness and in turn increased enrollment.

Attention was given to job placement for those GED recipients who did not wish to immediately pursue further education. Students were taken to the County's job fairs with updated resumes created in the classroom. On an ongoing basis, students have access to a clothing room in order to dress appropriately for potential employers. They utilized the "closet" for the job fairs.

A highlight for each GED recipient is the Graduation Ceremony held in June of each year. Students experience a true graduation, including cap and gown, a diploma and a processional. It is a truly emotional event.

The Youth Council is proud of its role in preparing our youth for the employment and training arena.





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The County of Gloucester complies with all state and federal rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status or disability in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities. In addition, Gloucester County encourages the participation of people with disabilities in its programs and activities and offers special services to all County residents 60 years of age and older. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the Division of Disability Services at (856) 384-6842/New Jersey Relay Service 711 or the EEO office at (856)384-6903.